The Standing Committee has held three meetings so far and made the following recommendations:

(i) Government of India should work out a detailed scheme in consultation with State Governments for localized procurement of foodgrains.

(ii) List of essential commodities should be reduced to the minimum and control orders should be reduced or removed at least in respect of wheat and rice to ensure free movement of agricultural produce.

(iii) Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojna be launched in view of large grain stocks.

(iv) The Grain Bank Scheme should be expanded and extended to all types of calamities and, all BPL families in identified areas should be covered.

(v) The Crop Insurance Scheme has to be made more effective for better risk management.

(vi) The Committee also suggested for promotion of crop diversification and agriculture exports. The committee noted that Minimum Support Price (MSP) was a very important tool and should be rationalized to facilitate diversification particularly towards oilseeds and pulses. The Committee stressed the need to promote exports of agriculture products through improvement in the quality and value of such products in order increase their competitiveness.

Depression in A.P.

596. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of persons killed, displaced and missing as a result of the recent depression in the Bay of Bengal distrsict-wise in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the details of damage caused to roads, bridges and other loss suffered in the State; and

(c) the details of financial and other assistance to be provided to Andhra Pradesh Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) According to available information, loss of 167 human lives has been reported from Ananthapur, Chittoor, Cuddapah, Guntur, Kurnol and Nellore districts while 45 deaths have been reported from other districts. 21 persons are reported to be missing.

(b) The State Government has estimated the loss to various sectors at about Rs. 925 crore.

(c) Entire Central share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for 2001-02 amounting to Rs. 155.97 crore has been released to the state for undertaking immediate relief measures in the wake of natural calamities including floods. Assistance from National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) is under consideration.

Scientists in Central Institute of Fisheries Education

597. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 41 per cent posts of scientists in the Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Mumbai were laying vacant as on 31st March, 2000 and the activities of the Institute are hampered due to acute shortage of scientists;

(b) whether the building work of the deemed University planned in 1986 at a cost of Rs. 6.67 crore has not commenced yet;

(c) whether against annual demand of 200 fisheries scientists, only 221 have passed out from 1995 to 2000;

(d) if so, the reasons for these failures; and

(e) what steps are being taken to remedy these shortcomings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Some scientific posts in the specialized disciplines at the Central Institute of Fisheries Education (CIFE), Mumbai are lying vacant but